

I. Introduction:

This is the last study for this book. These last two chapters talk about letting the scriptures speak and leading someone to Christ. The common thread in both practices is that God is the one who really leads the person to Christ. We are just facilitators, librarians or midwives. God is the one who grows the seed. But we do have a role to play and this role does take courage and commitment.

II. Chapter 16: Letting the Scriptures Speak:

Nothing else is like the Scriptures. Our finest arguments, our most brilliant apologetics pale in comparison to the power of the Scriptures themselves in bringing people to faith in Jesus Christ. It matters not if the reader accepts or rejects their inspiration and authority. If he or she is willing to give them honest consideration, they will burn their way into the heart.

1. Have you experienced the power of the Scriptures in your life? When? How?
2. What is your goal when getting a group of people together to read the bible?
3. The book says that we should try to be the librarian rather than the teacher of this group. What does this mean? Why is important to be the librarian rather than the teacher?

III. Chapter 17: Midwifing A New Birth:

TRUE SPIRITUAL CONVERSION is an event that occurs within a process in which God draws a person to himself. He continues to draw as the person continues to respond. Sometimes everything appears to stop for months or years. God never violates a person's will. But it's like a pregnancy. We, as midwives to this process, need to patiently and attentively observe the progress. When we get anxious or impatient and act precipitately, we risk a stillbirth. Most often, when a person is engaged in an exploration of the Scriptures, the birth will occur without our help. The new life will just be there one day, obvious to all. Sometimes we will need to lend a hand, as we did with Jerry and Donna.

4. Why do the authors describe our role in a new birth as “midwifing”? Why do they use that analogy?
5. Why is it important to be patient? What is an example of a person being impatient?

USUALLY, A GROUP that has come together to make an initial exploration ration of the Bible will follow a pattern, a life cycle. Over a period of months, as people understand who Jesus is and discover what he offers, the focus will shift to the issues they are grappling with in their personal lives. Almost everyone lives with pain and is in need of healing. Now they see hope that something can be done about it. Once healing has started, it is important to continue on toward maturity. But we can't stop there either or we'll stagnate. Our pursuit of maturity must take place in the context of a vision of God's purposes for us as an insider. It may take as little as two years to grow through this pattern-or tern-or it may take ten! It all depends on where people are starting. As the pattern repeats, spiritual generations should emerge.

6. What are the different stages in the life cycle of a group? What do the authors mean when they say “spiritual generations”?

IV. Application & Prayer Points:

7. Think of the people you've been praying for that are on your neighborhood/office map. Where are you in your relationship with them? Are you ready to ask them "I've been thinking about getting a few friends together to read the Bible. I find this helps me keep my life on track, and I'm not doing this with anyone right now. Would you be open to something like that?"
8. If you're not yet ready to extend that type of invitation, what steps do you need to take to be able to get there?
9. Pray for your neighbors or coworkers or friends in your group. Pray that God will give us spiritual generations through these very people we've been praying for.